

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

DIA WASHDC

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USM USUN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USM GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USM NATO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

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SUBJECT: PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA ON THE CCD

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1. SUMMARY. PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA FEBRUARY 16 PROPOSE

THAT THE CCD AGENDA IN ITS UPCOMING SESSION CONCENTRATE ON A BAN ON NEW MASS DESTRUCTION WEAPONS; ON ENMOD; AND ON A CHEMICAL WEAPONS BAN. THOUGH THE IZVESTIYA PIECE CALLS FOR AGREEMENT ON LANGUAGE ON ALL THREE BY THE END OF 1976, SOVIET INTEREST IS OBVIOUSLY CENTERING ON THE MDW, AND WE SUSPECT THAT THEIR EFFORTS ON THE OTHER TWO ISSUES WILL PALE IN COMPARISON. INDEED, CRITICISM IN THE COMMENTARIES OF THE U.S. FOR DELAYING COMPLETION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS BAN WHICH WAS FARILY PROMINENT IN A RECENT PRAVDA COMMENTARY (REFTEL) IS HEAVILY MUTED, PERHAPS IN AN EFFORT TO GET ON OUR GOOD SIDE ON THE MDW QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

2. PRAVDA'S COMMENTARY BY LEONID NIKOLAYEV SAYS THAT THREE "IMPORTANT AND RESPONSIBLE" TASKS FACE THE CCD THIS SESSION: THE "IMPERATIVE NECESSITY" OF PREVENTING THE CREATION OF NEW TYPES AND SYSTEMS OF MASS DESTRUCTION WEAPONS; AN ENMOD CONVENTION; AND A CONVENTION ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS; NIKOLAYEV CALLS FOR THE "URGENT PREPARATION AND CONCLUSION" OF AN MDW AGREEMENT, STRESSING THE USUAL LINE THAT NEW WEAPONS SYSTEM COULD BE DEVELOPED WHICH WOULD BE EVEN MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS. HIS DISCUSSION OF THE ENMOD PROPOSAL DOES NOT EMPHASIZE PARTICULAR URGENCY, NOTING ONLY THAT THE IDENTICAL U.S. AND SOVIET DRAFTS FOR THE CONVENTION ARE A "GOOD BASIS" FOR THE COMMITTEE'S WORK.

3. NIKOLAYEV'S COMMENTS ON THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION ARE PHRASED A BIT MORE SHARPLY. HE NOTES THAT THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL WAS MADE "AS FAR BACK AS 1972", AND CON- TENDS THAT AGREEMENT ON A CONVENTION IS BEING BLOCKED BY "A NUMBER OF WESTERN STATES". NIKOLAYEV DOES NOT SUBJECT THE U.S. TO SPECIFIC CRITICISM, THOUGH BY NOTING THAT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED AT THE JULY 1974 AND THE VLADIVOSTOK SUMMITS TO WORK TOWARD A "JOINT INITIATIVE" ON THE MORE TOXIC AGENTS, HE IMPLICITLY JOGS THE U.S. FOR DRAGGING ITS FEET. HOWEVER, HIS CRITICISM OF THE U.S. ON THIS ISSUE IS MUCH LESS POINTED THAN THAT CONTAINED IN A SIMILAR PRAVDA COMMENTARY DECEMBER 20 (REFTEL).

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4. THE IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY BY V. OSIPOV LAYS OUT EXACTLY THE SAME AGENDA FOR THE CCD, IN THE SAME ORDER OF PRIORITY. OSIPOV BELABORS NO ONE ON THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION, THOUGH HE TAKES A SWIPE AT THE U.S. ON ENMOD BY SAYING THAT U.S. ACTIVITIES IN INDOCHINA SHOWED THAT MEANS TO INFLUENCE THE ENVIRONMENT FOR MILITARY ENDS AL-

READY EXIST. OSIPOV UNDERLINES THE SUPPORT BY THE "OVER-

WHELMING MAJORITY" OF U.N. MEMBERS FOR THESE AND OTHER COMMUNIST BLOC DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS, AND CONCLUDES THAT PAST U.N. RESOLUTIONS ON THESE ISSUES PROVIDE "A GOOD AND TESTED BASIS FOR THE COMMITTEE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON CORRESPONDING DOCUMENTS DURING THE COURSE OF ITS PRESENT SESSION, THAT IS, DURING 1976."

5. COMMENT: WE ASSUME THAT THESE COMMENTARIES REFLECT ACCURATELY THE OFFICIAL SOVIET LINE, AND ARE FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT THE OPENING SOVIET SPEECH IN THE CCD WILL BE VERY SIMILAR TO THEM. THE MDW PROPOSAL IS OBVIOUSLY THE GLAMOR ITEM ON THE SOVIET AGENDA FOR 1976, AND, IF WE READ THESE COMMENTARIES CORRECTLY, MOSCOW MIGHT BE WILLING TO DELAY WORK ON A CHEMICAL WEAPONS BAN EVEN FURTHER -- AND TO MUTE CRITICISM OF THE U.S. ON THIS ISSUE -- IN ORDER TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON THE MDW QUESTION.

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